IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented)   In a MOSFET transistor with a reactive metal gate electrode, a method for protecting the gate electrode from an underlying gate insulator, the method comprising:

   forming a gate insulator overlying a channel region;

   forming a first metal barrier overlying the gate insulator, having a thickness of less than 5 nanometers (nm);

   forming a second metal gate electrode overlying the first metal barrier with a work function exclusively responsive to the second metal; and,

   wherein the second metal is a material selected from a group including NbO, Pd, and Nb.

2. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein forming a second metal gate electrode includes forming a second metal gate electrode having a thickness of greater than about 10 nm.

3. (original)   The method of claim 2 wherein forming a first metal barrier includes forming a first metal barrier having a thickness of greater than 1.5 nm, and less than 5 nm.

4. canceled

5. (original)   The method of claim 1 wherein forming a gate insulator overlying a channel region includes forming a gate insulator from a material selected from the group including SiO_2, high-k dielectrics such as HfO_2, ZrO_2, Al_2O_3, La_2O_3, HfAlOx, and HfAlON, and binary, ternary, and nitrided metal oxides.

6.   (original)   The method of claim 1 wherein forming a first metal barrier includes forming the first metal barrier from a material selected from the group including binary metals such as TaN, TiN, and WN.

7.   (original)   The method of claim 6 wherein forming a second metal gate electrode includes forming a second metal gate electrode having a high work function.

8.   (previously presented)   The method of claim 7 wherein forming a second metal gate electrode with a high work function includes the second metal being selected from the group including Pt and Pd.

9.   (original)   The method of claim 6 wherein forming a second metal gate electrode includes forming a second metal gate electrode having a low work function.

10.   (previously presented)   The method of claim 9 wherein forming a second metal gate electrode with a low work function includes selecting the second metal from the group including Nb and NbO.

11.   (original)   The method of claim 1 wherein establishing a gate work function exclusively responsive to the second metal includes establishing a threshold voltage (Vth).

12.   (original)   The method of claim 1 wherein forming a first barrier metal overlying the gate insulator includes the first metal

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barrier preventing the migration of oxygen from the gate insulator to the second metal gate electrode.

13-26. canceled

27.   (previously presented)   In a MOSFET transistor with a reactive metal gate electrode, a method for protecting the gate electrode from an underlying gate insulator, the method comprising:

forming a gate insulator overlying a channel region;

forming a first metal barrier overlying the gate insulator;

forming a second metal gate electrode overlying the first metal barrier having a work function selected from a group consisting of a high work function and a low work function;

wherein the gate electrode has a high work function exclusively responsive to the second metal being selected from a group consisting of Ir, Re, Ni, Mn, Co, RuO2, Pd, Mo, and TaSiN; and,

wherein the gate electrode has a low work function exclusively responsive to the second metal being selected from the group consisting of Nb and NbO.

28.   canceled

29.   (previously presented)   In a MOSFET transistor with a reactive metal gate electrode, a method for protecting the gate electrode from an underlying gate insulator, the method comprising:

forming a gate insulator overlying a channel region;

forming a WN metal barrier overlying the gate insulator, having a thickness of less than 5 nanometers (nm); and,

forming a second metal gate electrode overlying the WN metal barrier with a work function exclusively responsive to the second metal, the second metal selected from a group consisting of Pt, Pd, Nb, and NbO.